

Clean Air Act Reauthorization

STATUS REPORT for Senators

February 1, 1982

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ACTS ON CLEAN AIR

Under the leadership of Chairman Robert Stafford, the Environment Committee is proceeding to rewrite the Clean Air Act. Senator Stafford has announced his intention of completing Committee work on the Clean Air Act by early March. To accomplish that ambitious goal, he has scheduled Committee mark-up sessions twice each week through February.

The Committee is proceeding cautiously through the major Clean Air Act issues. The Committee first rejected any changes to the way in which the Environmental Protection Agency sets the national health standards--one of the cornerstones of the Clean Air Act. That quick action was followed by much slower consideration of possible changes to the pollution control requirements for cars and trucks. Senator Hart sponsored a series of amendments to clarify the deadlines and requirements for controlling pollution from trucks. The Committee accepted those amendments, deciding not to give discretion to EPA to change these standards.

But the Committee was unable to complete action on a Symms-Baker amendment to double the emissions of carbon monoxide from new cars. Senator Domenici urged that the Committee delay action until after the Christmas recess, so that Senators could be better informed about the potential health effects of that change.

As the Committee resumes mark-up, changes to the auto emission control program are the order of business. The Committee also must consider possible changes to sections of the law which clean up dirty air, protect clean air, control cancer-causing toxic pollutants, control the pollutants that cause acid

**NATIONAL
CLEAN AIR
COALITION**

(202) 543-8200

530 7th Street, S.E. Washington, D.C. 20003

rain, and control emissions from new coal-fired powerplants.

When the legislation reaches the floor, the National Clean Air Coalition anticipates that the auto industry will mount a major campaign to weaken the emission standards for new autos. The auto industry has been unable to find a Committee co-sponsor for its amendment to weaken the standard for nitrogen oxides, and the Symms-Baker amendment to weaken the carbon monoxide standard is still under consideration in Committee.

The complete wish list of the auto industry is embodied in a new Dirty Air Bill recently introduced in the House of Representatives. That bill, H.R. 5252, weakens both carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide standards, as well as making changes to the EPA testing procedures and warranty provisions which will make compliance with the standards nearly impossible.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE POLL CONFIRMS
PUBLIC SUPPORT OF STRONG CLEAN AIR ACT

The Chamber of Commerce commissioned an Opinion Research Corporation poll to examine public support for the Clean Air Act. Contrary to the Chamber's claims, the poll confirms the overwhelming support for the Clean Air Act found by Lou Harris.

The Chamber poll demonstrates that huge majorities favor reviewing the Clean Air Act and making administrative or procedural changes to lower compliance costs if air quality programs are not weakened. However, when asked whether they would trust business and industry as a source of recommended changes to the Act, only 37 percent of the respondents found they would, while 69 percent trusted environmental organizations.

When asked what aspects of the clean air goals were important--health, recreation or protection of natural resources--30 percent said there should be no air pollution of any kind at all. 70 percent said air pollution must also protect recreation or natural resources in addition to protecting health.

After being informed of the projected costs of air pollution control, 63 percent found these costs to be acceptable or endorsed increasing air pollution control expenditures. Only 22 percent of those polled endorsed relaxing environmental standards to achieve growth.

ACID RAIN BILL ADDRESSES
SERIOUS AIR POLLUTION PROBLEM

The Acid Deposition Control Act, introduced by Senators Mitchell, Chafee and Stafford, amends the Clean Air Act to address a mounting national and international problem, recognized by NAS and NCAQ. This bill, S. 1706, mandates a 10 million ton reduction in annual emissions of acid rain-causing pollutants within 10 years. Reductions would be simply and equitably allocated among 31 eastern states. Reports of increasing acidity of rain and acid rain-related damage from many sections of the country are convincing Senators of the urgent need of this bill. The National Clean Air Coalition urges Senators to join with the growing bi-partisan support for taking action to control acid rain by co-sponsoring the Mitchell-Chafee-Stafford acid rain bill, S. 1706.